

Message Text

SECRET

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ORIGIN SS-25

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O P 160027Z JUN 77 ZFF4
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO USDEL SECRETARY IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA PRIORITY
AMCONSUL BELIZE PRIORITY

S E C R E T STATE 138379 TOSEC 060011

EXDIS, FOR SECRETARY VANCE FROM LUERS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PBOR, PGOV, PINS, GT, BH, UK

SUBJECT: MESSAGE FROM BRITISH TO SECRETARY ON BELIZE AND
REACTION TO GUATEMALAN STATEMENT

1. BRITISH EMBOFF CALLED JUNE 13 TO RELAY SUBSTANCE OF
CABLE HE JUST RECEIVED FROM UK FONMIN OWEN. CABLE INDI-
CATED WHEN YOU SPOKE WITH OWEN IN PARIS YOU ASKED WHETHER
UK WANTED BELIZE DISCUSSED AT OASGA, AND OWEN INDICATED
HE WOULD CHECK PRIOR TO RESPONDING. OWEN SAID HE WELCOMES
YOUR INTEREST, AND UNDERSTANDS THE COMMONWEALTH CARIBBEAN
COUNTRIES ALREADY PLAN TO RAISE BELIZE INDEPENDENCE AT

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OASGA. HE DOES NOT BELIEVE U.S. SHOULD TAKE LEAD AT OASGA
IN SUPPORTING BELIZEAN INDEPENDENCE, BUT WOULD APPRECIATE
SYMPATHETIC AND CONSTRUCTIVE SUPPORT AS APPROPRIATE FOR
CARIBBEAN COMMONWEALTH INITIATIVE. OWEN FEELS ANYTHING
WE CAN DO TO ENSURE WIDER HEMISPHERIC DISCUSSION OF AND
SUPPORT FOR BELIZEAN INDEPENDENCE WILL BE USEFUL.

2. OWEN NOTED THAT UK CONSIDERED OAS MEDIATION (PRESUMABLY HE MEANT MEDIATION BY ORFILA) PROBABLY NOT USEFUL. OWEN ADDED THAT UK HAS NO OBJECTION TO ATTEMPTED MEDIATION BY MEXICAN FONMIN, PROVIDED THE ATTEMPT IS MADE QUICKLY. OWEN DOUBTS, HOWEVER, THAT MEXICAN MEDIATION WILL BE ACCEPTABLE TO GUATEMALA.

3. GUATEMALA RELEASED LENGTHY COMMUNIQUE JUNE 12 VOCIFEROUSLY DEFENDING ITS POSITION ON BELIZE AND CLAIMING THAT UK "HAS PUT INTO PRACTICE IN COMPLICITY WITH PRICE (BELIZEAN PREMIER), WHO IN TURN HAS PLOTTED WITH THE REGIMES OF CUBA AND PANAMA, THE EXECUTION OF SUBVERSIVE ACTIONS OF TERRORISM AND OF AGITATION IN THE CAPITAL OF GUATEMALA AND OTHER SETTLEMENTS IN THE INTERIOR OF THE COUNTRY. THESE ACTIONS INCLUDE STRIKES BY STUDENTS AND WORKERS, ESPECIALLY OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE, BURNING OF VEHICLES, GASOLINE STATIONS AND COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL ESTABLISHMENTS, AS WELL AS KIDNAPPINGS, ASSASSINATIONS, AND ACTIONS AGAINST BUSINESSMEN, FUNCTIONARIES, MILITARY LEADERS AND PROFESSIONAL PEOPLE".

4. BRITISH EMBASSY OFFICER INDICATED UK HIGHLY ANNOYED AT THIS CHARGE THAT IT IS SPONSORING TERRORIST ACTIVITIES. UK EMBASSY OFFICER ADDED THAT HE WONDERED WHETHER WE INTERPRETED THIS TOGETHER WITH REPORTS UK HAS RECEIVED OF SOME GUATEMALAN TROOP MOVEMENTS AS MEANING ATTACK ON BELIZE MIGHT BE IMMINENT.

5. ARA/CEN DIRECTOR TOLD UK EMBOFF THAT HE HAD NO SIG-SECRET

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NIFICANT REPORTS OF SUSPICIOUS TROOP MOVEMENT AND STRONGLY DOUBTED GUATEMALA WAS PLANNING ANY ATTACK DURING OASGA OR PRIOR TO EARLY JULY TALKS WITH UK, AT LEAST. ARA/CEN DIRECTOR SPECULATED THAT GUATEMALAN STATEMENT MAY BE RELATED TO INTERNAL SUBVERSIVE AND INSURGENCY PROBLEM BY TRYING TO LINK INTERNAL DISRUPTION WITH AIDING ENEMY AS WELL AS TO ATTEMPT TO HEAD OFF PRO-BELIZEAN RESOLUTION AT OASGA. HE ADDED OUR HOPE THAT THIS GUATEMALAN STATEMENT WOULD NOT BE ALLOWED BY UK TO ENDANGER JULY TALKS.

6. UK EMBOFF SAID HE HAD NO REASON TO BELIEVE UK WOULD CANCEL JULY BILATERAL WITH GUATEMALA BECAUSE OF GUATEMALAN COMMUNIQUE.

7. RECOMMENDATION: IN LINE WITH YOUR EARLIER DECISION THAT WE KEEP A NON-COMMITTAL AND LOW PROFILE ON BELIZE UNTIL AFTER GUATEMALA-UK TALKS IN EARLY JULY, WE RECOMMEND THAT WE CONFINE OUR DISCUSSIONS AT OASGA WITH

GUATEMALANS TO TALKING POINTS PROVIDED FOR YOUR BILATERAL WITH MOLINA. WITH NON-GUATEMALANS, WE RECOMMEND ONLY EXPRESSIONS OF HOPE THAT UK-GUATEMALAN BILATERALS IN EARLY JULY WILL PRODUCE MUTUALLY SATISFACTORY RESOLUTION OF PROBLEM. ANY RESOLUTION ON BELIZE AT OASGA WOULD HOPEFULLY NOT RESULT IN A DIVISION BETWEEN ENGLISH AND SPANISH SPEAKING MEMBERS. WHILE WE WOULD NOT WANT TO TAKE A LEAD,

THE PROCESS OF DISCUSSING A BLAND RESOLUTION WITH LATIN STATES WOULD OFFER A GOOD OPPORTUNITY TO PROBE THE THINKING OF KEY STATES ON THIS CRITICAL ISSUE. OBVIOUSLY WE SHOULD ABSTAIN ON ANY DIVISIVE RESOLUTION THAT MIGHT COME TO A VOTE. CHRISTOPHER

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